

RECENT LITERATURE.

Chapman's 'Camps and Cruises of an Ornithologist.'¹— Says the author: "During the past seven years, with the assistance of artist and preparateur, I have devoted the nesting season of birds to collecting specimens and making field studies and photographs on which to base a series of what have been termed 'Habitat Groups' of North American birds for the American Museum of Natural History. These groups," it is further stated, "are designed to illustrate not only the habits and haunts of the birds shown, but also the country in which they live." The groups, therefore, contain not only the birds, with their nests and young, placed in a facsimile reproduction of their original surroundings, but the background forms an accurate panoramic representation of the adjoining country. This is shown not only the character of the immediate location of the nest, but a considerable area characteristic of the haunts of the species, reproduced from studies by the artist on the spot, aided by photographs. Thus are introduced various types of physiographic conditions, which render the groups geographically as well as ornithologically instructive. They are unrivalled by any similar reproductions elsewhere, no expense having been spared to secure accuracy of detail, while the panoramic backgrounds, some of them nearly thirty feet in length, give ample space for comprehensive scenic effects.

The assembling of all this material entailed extensive journeys, and the results accurately portray strikingly diverse types of country, ranging from subtropical scenes in the Bahamas and the Everglades of Florida to the deserts of Arizona, the prairies and badlands of Nebraska and Wyoming, the irrigated lands of interior California, the marshy lakes of Oregon, and the alpine summits of the Rocky Mountains in Alberta, as well as marshes and cliffs nearer home. To quote again from the author's preface: "No ornithologist, I imagine, has ever pursued his calling with greater pleasure and satisfaction than I have experienced in gathering the material and data for these groups of birds. Not only has it been my fortune to behold some of the most interesting and remarkable sights in the world of birds, but it has been my privilege to have them reproduced in so admirable a manner that they convey to others a wholly adequate conception of the scene itself." The purpose of the present book is "now further to perpetuate these experiences and studies by telling the story of the various expeditions of which the groups were the objects, adding such information concerning the birds observed as seems worthy of record, and illustrating

¹ *Camps and Cruises of an Ornithologist* | By | Frank M. Chapman | Curator of Ornithology, American Museum of Natural History | Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union; Author of | "Handbook of Birds of Eastern North America" | "Bird-Life"; "Bird Studies with a Camera," etc. | With 250 photographs from Nature | by the Author | New York | D. Appleton and Company | 1908 — 8vo, pp. xvi + 432, with 250 half-tone illustrations. November, 1908. \$3.00 net.

the whole with many photographs from nature and a number of the groups themselves."

The book is divided into eight parts, as follows: Part I, 'Travels about Home,' in which are treated The ways of Jays, A morning with Meadow-larks, Bird-nesting with Burroughs, A Nighthawk incident. Part II, 'The Bird-life of two Atlantic Coast Islands'—Gardiner's Island and Cobb's Island. Part III, 'Florida Bird-life'—Pelican Island, the Florida Great Blue Heron and the Water Turkey, the American Egret, Cuthbert Rookery. Part IV, 'Bahama Bird-life'—the Flamingo, the Egg Birds, the Booby and the Man-o'-War Bird. Part V, 'The Story of Three Western Bird Groups'—the Prairie Hen, a Golden Eagle's nest, Cactus Desert Bird-life. Part VI, 'Bird Studies in California'—the Coastal Mountains at Piru, the coast at Monterey, the Farallones, the San Joaquin Valley at Los Banos, Lower Klamath Lake, the Sierras. Part VII, 'Bird-life in Western Canada'—the Prairies, the Plains, the Mountains, the White Pelican. Part VIII, 'Impressions of English Bird-life,' and indexes. An 'Introduction' of eight pages reveals to the reader some of the methods and devices by which the photographic results shown in the present volume were obtained.

The foregoing will sufficiently explain the scope, purpose, and general character of this exceptionally interesting and, in many respects, remarkable book, where a wealth of photographic illustrations so effectively supplements the text. It remains therefore only to say that the story of these varied experiences is most modestly yet effectively and pleasingly told, without resort to anything beyond simple and direct statement of events, more varied and opportune than has probably ever before fallen to the lot of an ornithologist. There were, of course, mishaps and unpleasant experiences, but they leave slight trace in the author's narrative, so full of new, first-hand information about birds whose home-life was previously, in many cases, by no means well known. The book is appropriately dedicated to Hermon C. Bumpus, Director of the American Museum of Natural History, and "to those members of the Museum whose coöperation made possible the work on which it is based."—J. A. A.

Preble on the Birds of the Athabaska-Mackenzie Region.¹—This admirable work of nearly 600 pages and numerous illustrations is based mainly on the field work of Mr. Preble during two expeditions, the first in 1901, the second in 1903-'04. The publication of the report having been unavoidably delayed till the present year (1908), it represents the state of knowledge of the region down to the spring of 1908. It includes

¹ A Biological Investigation of the Athabaska-Mackenzie Region. By Edward A. Preble, Assistant, Biological Survey. Prepared under the direction of Dr. C. Hart Merriam, Chief of Bureau of Biological Survey. = North American Fauna No. 27, October 26, 1908. 8vo, pp. 574, pll. i-xxv (including map of the region), and 16 text figures. Birds, pp. 251-500.